



Carmen P. Forte Jr.

Partner

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Overview

Carmen Forte, Jr. counsels Illinois municipalities, school districts, libraries, special districts and corporate and non-profit clients. He regularly litigates in state and federal court and various administrative venues for clients in a range of matters. He works with our clients to negotiate and manage development agreements, helping to bring significant residential and commercial development to their communities. He has prosecuted for the firm's numerous municipal clients in the areas of DUI and traffic offenses, local ordinance violations and business, tobacco and liquor licensing matters. He also defends the firm's clients in workers' compensation claims, disability pension matters and matters under the Public Safety Employee Benefits Act (PSEBA). Currently, Carmen serves as Village Attorney for the Village of Campton Hills, as Assistant Village Attorney for the Villages of Schaumburg and Vernon Hills, and as Special Counsel for the Village of River Grove.

Prior to joining Klein, Thorpe & Jenkins, Carmen served as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. During his time as a criminal prosecutor, he handled felony and misdemeanor matters and tried numerous bench and jury trials. During his time with the State's Attorney's Office, he served as a law clerk in the prosecution of musician Robert "R" Kelly.

Carmen received his B.A. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame and his J.D. from the John Marshall Law School. During that time, he interned in the United States Senate, served as a legislative aide in the Illinois House of Representatives, worked as a law clerk with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and was a member

of the Notre Dame Glee Club. Carmen is admitted to practice in the state of Illinois, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Carmen knew he wanted to be a local government attorney even as a young child, while attending many village board meetings where his father served as a long tenured trustee in his hometown of Elmwood Park. Building on his interest in those early years, he has devoted his legal career to supporting local government.

Carmen and his wife Ashley, who is also an attorney, live in Campton Hills with their two sons and their dogs, Slinky and Dug.

Professional Affiliations

- Carmen is a member of the Illinois State Bar Association, Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association, and the Justinian Society of Lawyers.

Community Involvement

- Carmen previously served as a trustee of the Village of Elmwood Park Library Board. During his tenure on the Board, he held the positions of President and Vice President and also chaired several committees.
- Carmen previously served on the Plan, Zoning and Development Commission of the Village of Elmwood Park, where he was the Commission Secretary. He is a strong supporter of the Grand Chamber by O'Hare, and his family has operated a local plumbing business in nearby River Grove since the 1960s.
- Carmen previously served as the President of the Columbian Club of Chicago, where he is currently a trustee of the Club's charitable foundation. The Columbian Club is a charitable foundation and fraternal organization that is devoted to advancing Italian culture and heritage, and supporting other organizations and individuals in need. Each year its foundation awards several scholarships to college and graduate students of Italian descent.

Awards and Recognition

- Carmen has been recognized by Leading Lawyers, a division of Law Bulletin Media. This distinction is conferred on less than 2% of attorneys in each state.
- Carmen received the 2015 President's Award from the Oak Leyden Developmental Services

Publications

- "The Prosecution of Traffic and DUI Cases by Local Governments" – author, Municipal Law (Illinois): Organization, Operation, and Governance, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education Practice Volume, 2019, 2023

- The Sunshine Laws, Open Meetings Acts and Freedom of Information Acts – co-author, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education Practice Volume, 2020
- Manual on Units of Local Government Business Regulation, Taxation and Licensing – co-author, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education Practice Volume, 2020
- “Tort Liability of School Districts,” – author, Illinois School Law, Organization, Finance and Property, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education Practice Volume, 2017

Presentations

- Standing Room Only: How to Effectively Approach Crowds at Public Meeting – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2024
- Municipal Considerations for Recreational Cannabis: Zoning and Regulatory Controls - Chicago Bar Association Local Government Committee, 2023
- So My Library Formed a Union - Now What?: Strategies for Effective Management Alongside Employee Labor Unions - Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2023
- Post COVID-19 and the Library Employer-Employee Relationship – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2022
- FOIA as related to Patron Privacy and the Library Records Confidentiality Act – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2022
- Village Board of Trustees Meetings: Proper Procedures and Compliance with the Open Meetings Act -- Municipal Clerks Association of North and Northwest Cook County, 2022
- Cannabis Potpourri: Taxing, Zoning, Licensing, Employment, & Expungement – Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association Annual Conference, 2019
- How to Properly Investigate and Address Sexual Harassment Allegations within Your Library – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2018
- 3...2...1 Lift Off: A Discussion on Municipal Use & Regulation of Drones – Illinois Municipal League Annual Conference, 2018
- How to Avoid Missteps in the Social Media Minefield – Area Training for Librarians and Staff (ATLAS), Annual Trustee and Staff Training Workshop, 2018
- Sexual Harassment and Transgender Issues in the Workplace: A Guide to sensitivity, prevention, and detection – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2017
- Legal Issues Related to Library Patrons – Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) PrairieCat Users Group Session, 2017
- Library Board of Trustees Meetings: Proper Procedures and Compliance with the Open Meetings Act – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference 2017, 2019, 2021, Trustees Forum 2019, 2023, Illinois Heartland Library System 2021
- Employee Ethics Training - Village of Lake Zurich, 2017
- Building Code/Code Enforcement Hearings and Final Orders - Illinois Local Government Lawyers/Cook County Department of Administrative Hearings Administrative Hearing Officer Training, 2016

- The Do's and Don'ts of Construction and Remodeling Projects: From Drafting Bid Documents to Awarding the Contract - Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, 2016
- FOIA, OMA and Law Enforcement Requests - Area Training for Librarians and Staff (ATLAS), Annual Trustee and Staff Training Workshop, 2016
- Crime Free Housing Ordinance Seminars - Orland Park Police Department, 2013-2015
- Medical Cannabis and Concealed Carry, One Year Later - Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association, Municipal Prosecutors Group Seminar, 2014.
- Medical Marijuana and other Marijuana Enforcement Issues - Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association, Municipal Prosecutors Group Seminar, 2013.
- Medical Marijuana and other Marijuana Enforcement Issues - Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association Annual Conference, 2013.

Representative Cases

- Joliet Avionics, Inc. v. City of Aurora, 19 CV 8507 – U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Illinois – Obtained judgment in favor of the City on cross-motions for summary judgment in a class-of-one and breach of contract claim brought against the City based on alleged discrimination in differing lease terms between fixed-based operator tenants and enforcement of standards for operation at a municipally-owned airport.
- Stephen Hull v. Wheeling Police Pension Fund – Circuit Court of Cook County – affirmation of pension board ruling denying a line-of-duty disability pension based on alleged psychological conditions.
- Santana v. Village of Maywood – Circuit Court of Cook County – obtained dismissal of a complaint for personal injury from a trip and fall, based on the theory that a pedestrian is not an intended user of a portion of a street that is outside of a crosswalk.
- Collins v. Village of Niles – Circuit Court of Cook County – affirmation of the denial of benefits under the Public Safety Employee Benefits Act (PSEBA), based on a firefighter's career-ending injury sustained during a training incident.
- LNR Family Store, Inc. v. Village of Maywood, 2020 Ill App 1-19-1417 – Illinois Appellate Court, 1st District – affirmation of the dismissal of a Circuit Court complaint alleging due process violations under the 6th and 15th Amendments, based on the Village's revocation of the business and tobacco licenses of a nuisance business.
- Beckett v. Village of Maywood – Circuit Court of Cook County – obtained summary judgment on a complaint for personal injury from a parkway trip and fall, based on the Village's lack of notice of the specific defect.
- Olson v. Lombard Police Pension Fund, 2020 IL App (2d) 190113 – Illinois Appellate Court, 2nd District – affirmation of a pension board ruling denying a line-of-duty disability pension allegedly caused by cumulative on and off-duty incidents.
- Colella v. Village of Lombard - Circuit Court of DuPage County – obtained dismissal of a complaint for personal injury based on Village's lack of notice of a defective condition of a walking path inside of a Park District wooded area.
- Macchione v. City of Aurora – Circuit Court of Kane County – obtained dismissal of a complaint for personal injury caused by a criminal incident that occurred on City-owned property adjacent to a casino.

- Schroedle v. Village of Orland Park – Circuit Court of Cook County – obtained summary judgment on a complaint for personal injury from a sidewalk trip and fall, based on the Village’s lack of notice of the specific defect.

Related Practices

- Municipal Law
- Library Law
- School Law
- Special Districts
- Corporate Law
- Election Law
- Construction Law
- Labor and Employment
- Real Estate Law